

**Course Syllabus**  
**COMP 455-001 – Models of Languages and Computation**  
**Spring 2012**

**Meeting Place:** SN011  
**Meeting Time:** 11:00 - 12:15 MW

**Instructor:** Prof. David Plaisted  
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**Text:** *Elements of the Theory of Computation, chapters 1-7*, by Lewis and Papadimitriou.

**Prerequisites:** COMP 110 or 401, and MATH 381.

<b>Grading:</b> Homework	30%
Midterm Exams	38%
Pop Quizzes	2%
Final Exam	30%

There will be two mid-semester exams, a final, and probably 9 homework assignments. Most or all of the homeworks will consist of exercises from the text. The mid-semester exams will be on Wednesday, February 15 and Wednesday, March 28. Exams are in class and are closed book and closed notes. Be prepared for many pop quizzes, though they don't count much toward your grade. The grading algorithm will probably be 30 percent for the final exam, 19 percent for each mid semester exam, 30 percent for homework, and 2 percent for all pop quizzes put together.

Homework is due at the beginning of class. If the homework is more than 5 minutes late, you will lose 10 percent. If it is not handed in by the end of class, you lose 20 percent. If it is not handed in by the end of the day, you lose 30 percent. If it is not handed in the next day, you lose 40 percent or more.

Class participation and behavior in class can affect your grade, especially if it is on the borderline. Also, there are a few guidelines for behavior. If you have to leave class for a good reason, you don't need to wait until my back is turned. If you need to yawn, do it quietly. Try to enjoy class.

In my classes most of the students typically get a C or better, but I do not grade on a curve. This course requires some aptitude in theory. If you are weak in theory (i.e, math), do not be upset if you do not get an A or a B. In the fall of 2002 people did unusually well and there were 19 A's, 3 H's, 9 B's, and 6 C's. In the spring of 2002 there were 16 A's, 23 B's, 16 C's, and one D, not counting pluses and minuses and not counting graduate students, most of whom got H's. The 16 C's included one C-. Students who do not come to class often, tend to get lower grades unless they have exceptional ability in abstract thinking.

The COMP 455 web page is at [www.cs.unc.edu/~plaisted/comp455](http://www.cs.unc.edu/~plaisted/comp455).

You should be aware that the honor code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on exams and homework, is in effect.